

***Luzula arcuata* (Wahlenb.) Wahlenb.**  
curved woodrush  
Juncaceae (Rush Family)

**Status:** State Sensitive  
**Rank:** G5S1

**General Description:** Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1969):  
*Luzula arcuata* is a tufted, short-rhizomatous perennial that is 2 to 12 in. (5-30 cm) tall. The basal leaves are flat, usually purplish tinged, and densely hairy, with the margins often rolling in toward the upper side. The leaves are 3 to 6 in. (8-15 cm) long by 1/8 in. (3-5 mm) wide. The flowering stems are very slender. The inflorescence consists of 2-7 small, head-like or spike-like clusters, borne on very slender, spreading, and usually drooping branches. The bract closest to the inflorescence is bladeless (merely a sheath wrapped around the stem). The flower parts are light to dark brown, and fringed with hairs. The tepals are almost equal in length and about 1/16 in. (2 mm) long. The anthers are 0.3-0.5 mm long, and are somewhat shorter than the filaments. The egg-shaped capsules are almost the same length as the tepals.

**Identification Tips:** Within our range, *Luzula arcuata* may be mistaken for *L. spicata*. The two can be distinguished from each other by the following: *L. arcuata* is 2 to 12 in. (5-30 cm) tall, whereas *L. spicata* is 4 to 16 in. (10-40 cm) tall. The flowers of *L. arcuata* are borne in clusters, and the tepal margins are more or less fringed with hairs, while *L. spicata* has a more continuous and spikelike inflorescence, and the tepal margins are hairless. The leaves of *L. arcuata* are brownish- purple, while the leaves of *L. spicata* are not purplish. The basal leaves of *L. arcuata* are flat, and 3 to 6 in. (8-15 cm) long, by 1/8 in. (3-5 mm) wide, while the basal leaves of *L. spicata* are erect, and 3/4 to 6 in. (2-15 cm) long, by 1/16 in. (1-4 mm) wide. There are a few hairs present on the seeds of *L. arcuata*, while the seeds of *L. spicata* are hairless. A technical key is recommended for identification.

**Phenology:** This species is identifiable from July through August. The Washington populations were identified in August.

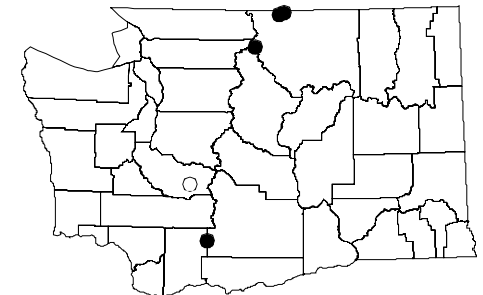
**Range:** This species is known from Alaska to British Columbia, with disjunct populations in Pierce, Yakima, Okanogan and Skagit counties, Washington.

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Known distribution  
of *Luzula arcuata*  
in Washington



- Current (1980+)
- Historic (older than 1980)

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**Habitat:** One Washington population of this species was found on a rocky exposed ridge at 7080 feet (2158 m) elevation. Another was found below a highly vegetated ridge crest between two snowfields on a volcanic boulder slope with flat pockets of sandy soil at 7200 feet (2195 m) elevation. Associated species in Washington have not been identified.

**Ecology:** The species is often found on glacial moraines at relatively high elevations.

**State Status Comments:** There are less than five recent occurrences of *Luzula arcuata* from Washington, and one historical record from Mt. Rainer in Pierce County.

**Inventory Needs:** Little is documented about Washington's known populations. All occurrences should be revisited for updated population information. Alpine to sub-alpine moraines in Washington should be systematically surveyed for additional populations.

**Threats and Management Concerns:** There are few known threats for this high-elevation species. Hikers may trample plants adjacent to trails.

**Comments:** Our *Luzula arcuata* (Wahlenb.) Wahlenb. is usually recognized as the New World variety *unalaschcensis* Buch.

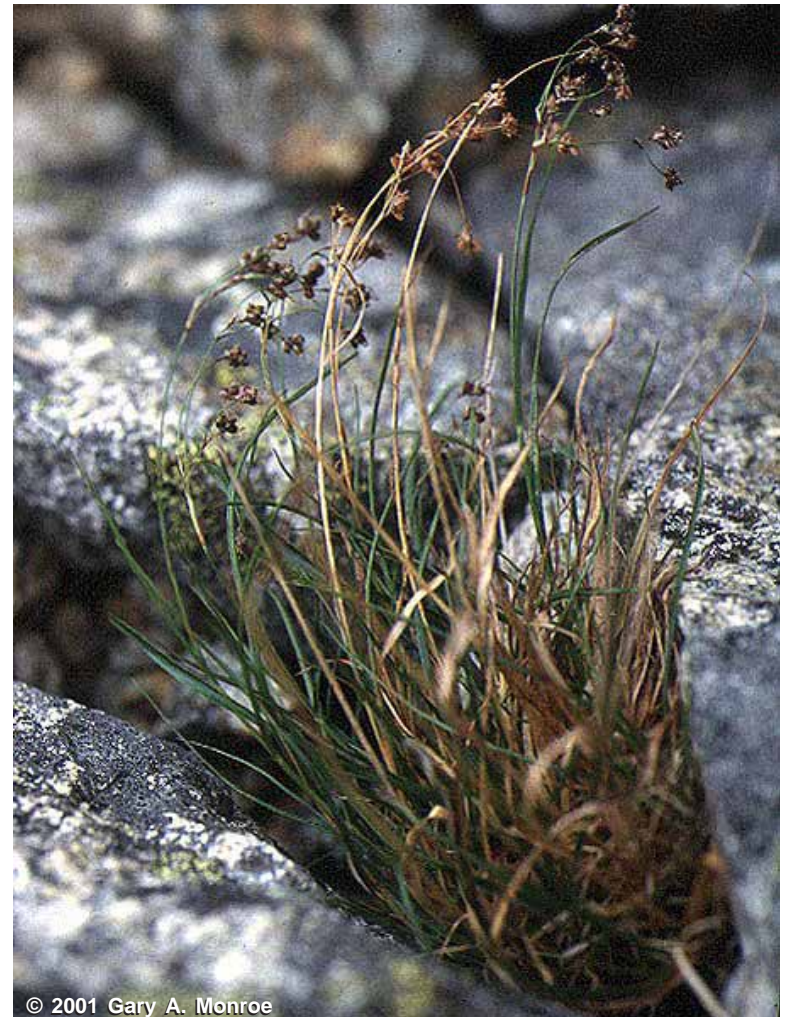
### **References:**

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Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1969. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 1: Vascular Cryptogams, Gymnosperms, and Monocotyledons*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 914 pp.

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